

Message Text

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64

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-09 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03

H-01 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 ACDA-05 AID-05 IO-10 SR-02 ORM-01 MC-02

/096 W

----- 034675

R 251157Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9443

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

C O N F I D E N T I A L KHARTOUM 0457

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, ET, SU

SUBJECT: ERITREAN CRISIS

BEGIN SUMMARY: SENIOR SUDANESE OFFICIAL CONFIRMED TO ME FEB 25
THERE HAS BEEN NO MOVEMENT ON GOS MEDIATION EFFORT.
HE ASKED RE PMAC REQUEST FOR USG ARMS AID
AND EXPRESSED CONCERN LEST MOUNTING TEMPO
ERITREAN FIGHTING CREATE INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT
SITUATION FOR SUDAN. END SUMMARY.

1. MINSTATE FONAFFS JAMAL MUHAMMED AHMED PROVIDED
ME FOLLOWING INFORMATION FEB 25 ON ASPECTS
ERITREAN CRISIS WHICH AFFECT SUDAN:

A. SUDANESE MEDIATION: AHMED EXPRESSED CONCERN
THAT HE HAD NOT HEARD FROM PMAC RE SUDANESE MEDIATION
OFFER IN THE TEN DAYS SINCE HIS RETURN FROM ADDIS. HE CLAIMED
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THAT PMAC HAD THERE ACCEPTED IT "IN PRINCIPLE" AND THAT
ACCORDINGLY SENIOR ETHIOPIAN OFFICIAL SHOULD BY NOW HAVE

COME HERE FOR FURTHER DISCUSSIONS. HE INDICATED ELF LEADER IDRIS MOHAMMED HAD NOT YET ARRIVED KHARTOUM BUT HAD SAID HE WOULD COME IF TALKS ARRANGED. PLF LEADER OSMAN SALAH SABBE HAD SIMILARLY INDICATED HIS INTENTION COME HERE.

B. SOVIET ATTITUDE: AHMED CONFIRMED SUDANESE PRESS REPORTS THAT SOVIET AMBASSADOR HAD SEEN HIM FEB 22 TO CONVEY USSR SUPPORT FOR NIMEIRI'S MEDIATION INITIATIVE. AHMED TOLD ME HE HAD HAD THIS INFO PUBLISHED IN ORDER TO SHOW ETHIOPIANS WHERE RUSSIANS STOOD (ETHIOPIAN CHARGE WHO I MET OUTSIDE AHMED'S OFFICE SAID HE WAS CALLING ON UNDERSECRETARY MIRGHANI "TO FIND OUT WHAT SUDANESE POLICY IS).

C. PMAC POLICIES: AHMED DEPLORED ADDIS REGIME'S HASTY NATIONALIZATION MEASURES EQUALLY WITH ITS MILITARY BUILDUP IN ERITREA. FORMER, HE INDICATED, MIGHT FUEL UNREST IN OTHER PARTS OF ETHIOPIA, WHILE HEAVY FIGHTING IN ERITREA COULD ONLY DEEPEN ERITREAN ANTIPATHY FOR ETHIOPIANS.

D. USG ARMS AID: AHMED THEN ASKED ABOUT PRESS STORIES RE ETHIOPIAN REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL USG ARMS AID. I REPLIED IT WAS MY IMPRESSION THIS REQUEST HAD INITIALLY BEEN MADE SOME MONTHS AGO AND SAID THAT IT WAS STILL UNDER CONSIDERATION. I RECALLED OUT LONG-STANDING MILITARY SUPPLY AND TRAINING RELATINSHIP WITH ETHIOPIAN FORCES AND SAID THAT REQUEST NOW UNDER CONSIDERATION HAD TO BE VIEWED IN THAT CONTEXT. AHMED DID NOT PURSUE SUBJECT.

E. ERITREAN EXILES IN SUDAN: I ASKED WHETHER AHMED COULD CONFIRM LOCAL PRESS REPORT THAT ETHIOPIAN MINAG DENACHEW YIRGA HAD JUST TAKEN REFUGE IN SUDAN. AHMED SAID HE HAD NO INFORMATION. HE SAID THERE WERE OF COURSE REFUGEES ENTERING SUDAN IN GEDAREF AREA AND THAT THIS WOULD BECOME INCREASING PROBLEM FOR GOS UNLESS FIGHTING STOPPED. HE THEN VOLUNTEERED AS EXAMPLE THE
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CASE OF RAS MENGESHA WHO IT HAD BEEN DIFFICULT CONTROL. MENGESHA HAD NOW LEFT (FOR EUROPE -- KHARTOUM 0340 NOTAL) BUT MIGHT WELL RETURN IF HE THOUGHT CIRCUMSTANCES WARRANTED.

2. COMMENT: AHMED WAS PLAINLY WORRIED THAT ABSENCE PMAC RESPONSE TO NIMEIRI'S INITIATIVE, PLUS MOUNTING TEMPO OF ERITREAN FIGHTING, IS CREATING AN INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT SITUATION FOR THE SUDAN. HIS QUERY RE POSSIBLE USG ARMS AID TO ETHIOPIA SUGGESTS GOS MAY

WELL BE PARTICULARLY SENSITIVE ANY AGREEMENT THIS SUBJECT
IN NEAR FUTURE AS LIKELY FURTHER REDUCE PMAC INTEREST IN
MEDIATION.
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